241 At noon (wend'to souka, "the middle of the day") the family
512 rests in the shade of a tree. There are always some fruit trees in every field. Work is resumed at about two in the afternoon. At five the women return home to prepare food, and the men stop work at nightfall.

241 The sisoaga. When the family fields are too extensive to be
476 cultivated without help, all the able-bodied young men in the village are called to help with the weeding.

At such a time the head of the family gives several baskets of sprouted millet to his wives to make large quantities of dam, millet beer. He also orders them to prepare sagbo (millet cakes).

On the day set for the work, the young men go to the fields, where their enthusiasm is aroused by singing and the beating of drums. For their work they receive sagbo and dam. This is what is known as the sisoaga.

It is a kind of mutual aid, and without this indispensable system of solidarity, many fields would remain uncultivated.

[573] It should be noted, finally, that when a person falls [246] ill during the winter, his friends arrange to cultivate his fields, sometimes without any pay and simply out of a sense of solidarity.

241 Farm implements. As is the case everywhere in French West Africa, the natives have only the most primitive implements. Among the Mossi these include: the wanka or kounri, a hoe or Bambara daba to cultivate the soil; the sitoaga (small pickaxe) for sowing; and the laré (ax) to clear the site of brush and shrubs.

463 Other types of work. Aside from work in the fields, everyone goes about his own affairs. Some make baskets, hampers, and fans, while others weave cotton strips. It is perhaps of some
[564 interest to note that there is no caste distinction among the Mossi,
326] except for the blacksmiths; each person may practice the trade that suits him. This is why shoemakers mostly come from among the nakomsé (descendants of naba).

Food Crops

241 The principal foods grown by the Mossi are as follows.
Kazouf (small white or gray millet).

462 on the other hand, are female prerogatives; every woman knows how to make millet beer, soap, karite butter, and kalro (soumbara) with varying effectiveness.

273 Millet beer is brewed with sprouted millet, which is boiled and reboiled in a volume of water proportionate to the amount of grain; yeast is added to the brew on the last day. The liquid is strained through twigs to remove the residue of millet. The more the beer is boiled, the stronger it is; when hops are added, the beverage recalls our own beer.

388 Soap is made with karite butter to which the ashes of millet stalks are added for potash.

252 Oil is extracted from peanuts, previously roasted and crushed between two stones; the women have no press and therefore lose a considerable amount of oil, but it remains in the residue, which is also sold.

Kalro is made from the beans found in the pods of néré /locust bean tree/. It has a strong and characteristic odor, but it enhances the sauce with a not unpleasant flavor.

463 The pottery, wood, and copper industries are carried out by specialists. This does not mean that only the members of a caste may exercise them, but that an apprenticeship is required which is not undergone by everyone, and that people bequeath to their children the secrets of the trade.

323 /58/ Pottery is chiefly made by women, although the men may
462 also work with clay and actually often make jars (canari), while the women make the large jars which are used in brewing millet beer, small pots in which they cook sarabo and sauce, and shallow dishes which are used to serve food.

323 The molding and firing methods are similar. A shallow pit is dug into the ground, larger or smaller depending on the size desired for the jar. The walls of the hole are pounded smooth. The woman places in this mold the prepared clay, previously kneaded with the feet and any stones removed. The clay is slightly damp, and the pit is dusted with dry earth. The woman spreads the clay with a well-polished granite stone and makes it revolve so that every portion of the clay is worked between the stone and the pit wall. After a while, she obtains the jar she wants in the proper thickness.

When several potters live in the same village, as usually happens, they get together for the firing. The jars are marked and gathered in

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241 picking, the plant may be turned under and left to enrich the soil.

241 Apart from the co-operative cultivation of fields under the proprietor-
476 ship of the lineage elder, each farmer works for himself. He aids his relatives, and they in turn assist him with his work, but the results of their communal effort are not shared. This applies not only to the work of planting but also to cultivation and harvest. The decision about what is to be planted in a particular field and how it shall be cultivated rests finally with the individual farmer.

Communal or co-operative effort is much more characteristic of the work of cultivation than of the planting period, when everyone is in a hurry to get his own seeds into the ground and requests for assistance are
[461] not welcomed. A strong note of competition is evident at this time. A man takes pride in his efficiency as a farmer, and there is a race to see who can get farthest along with his work. In the earliest phase of prepa-
[572] rations for the approaching rainy season it is the individual's best friend upon whom he relies most for assistance. He is the first person to be called on for assistance in clearing the field for planting. If a Mossi farmer is unmarried, he may also ask the other unmarried men of his lineage for help. If a long day must be spent in the field in order to clear and clean it properly, his mother will offer the helpers the midday meal, which is carried out to them as they work.

622 *Naba koba* (chief's cultivation) is the name given to the work which the
651 villagers do in the fields belonging to the village chief. A village elder is
241 charged with announcing when and where work in the chief's fields is to be done, and each lineage head relays the news to his kinsmen. This contribution of labor is no longer obligatory, as it was formerly, but only
[626] a question of social pressure and recognition that individual well-being and the welfare of the village "depend on the chief."

241 Every Mossi is an agriculturist. Although agriculture is the principal
463 source of income, everyone also engages in crafts, particularly during the dry season when the work in the fields is finished. However, there are no full-time crafts specialists. Even the African functionaries in the European administration and the teachers, clerks, and merchants all work in their fields part of the time during the rainy season. The activities of the blacksmiths, leather workers, butchers, wood workers, herbalists, and small merchants are carried out on a much smaller scale and are fitted into the routine established by the rains and the growth of their millet. Only elders whose age keeps them from the fields might be thought of as specialists who do not participate in agriculture, but their land is worked by younger members of the family, and they take a keen interest in the course of its cultivation. The village chief, the earth custodian, and certain other elderly and important members of the community do not cultivate; this is because of their position and age rather than because

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they are so exclusively occupied with political or religious duties. In every case, they own fields and are dependent upon their produce for an important part of their subsistence.

Each Mossi village in the Yatenga holds a market every third day; markets operate in nearby villages on the intermediate days. There are few full-time merchants; men usually market their wares themselves and trade in items of European manufacture. Except for the sale of meat, it is a man's wives who sell farm produce. For marketing her husband's surplus millet, a woman receives a gift when the market closes.

Markets are most active in the early hours of the morning when meat and farm produce are fresh. By afternoon only a few merchants stay on, trying to sell their remaining produce to late-comers at greatly reduced prices. Social satisfactions derived from participation in the market are greatly valued; it provides an opportunity for meeting friends and kinsmen and for exchanging gossip and observations on one another's dress, the crops, and current political developments. The market is a place for making loans and receiving small gifts from kinsmen and friends, for flirtations and the arrangement of rendezvous, and for that casual sort of social interaction which is one of the principal pleasures of life in the Yatenga.

The Mossi farmer is dependent on the co-operation of the members of his lineage both for the success of his individual economic endeavor and for their support if his crop should fail. To be assured of this support, he must contribute generously to the maintenance of his position in the intricate network of rights and obligations which describes the relationship of the individual to his kin group. A constant exchange of visits and presents, ceremonial and economic assistance, and presence and participation in the affairs of the lineage are necessary to maintain his status within this group.

The nature of the social, economic, and emotional dependence of the individual on his kinsmen, his affinal relations, and his neighbors is such that his social well-being and economic success may properly be regarded as depending as much on his skill in manipulating this complex web of relationships as on his specifically economic endeavors. When a man decides to forego a second weeding of his fields in order to prepare presents and make the journey to the funeral of a kinsman, he is making a choice which, considered in the total context of the culture, is realistically in accord with his own economic best interest.

The farmer feels equally dependent on the deceased members of his lineage, the ancestral spirits (*kiemse*). If he feeds them a chicken, they may steal the soul from a neighboring stand of millet and bring it to enrich his own field. If properly treated, they can be depended upon to protect his shea nut trees from the high winds which might otherwise

231 64 inhabitants among the nakomsé (nobles, descendants of chiefs, true Mossi). The Dagari and Nounouma, on the other hand, have one horse per 1,000 inhabitants, the Sissala one per 400, the Kassonboura one per 300. The Yarsé, who are in better circumstances than the common Mossi but less fond of horses than the nakomsé, have one horse per 100 people. Finally, the Foulbé of Mossi territory, who raise horses, have one for every 26 people.

To summarize, Mossi stockbreeding is mediocre except for donkeys and horses. Let us proceed to the hunt.

224 First of all, like the Gourounsi and all other populations of West Africa, the Mossi hunt collectively during the dry, warm season.

/494/ This collective endeavor is their chief hunting method.

Aside from this, the cultivators hunt individually with bow and arrow, chiefly during the dry season although sometimes also during the damp season.

Finally, there are a few elephant hunters in the southern regions. They are to be found only in the south, for in Mossi territory proper the relative density of the population and resulting extent of cultivated land make for a nearly total absence of elephants. Gourounsi and Boussansé lands, on the other hand, which are much less densely populated, include some deserted areas where elephants may be found. Mossi hunters, therefore, have settled in the southern part of the territory, on the borders of Gourounsi and Boussansé lands, to scour both regions /for elephants/.

At Kombisiguiri, for example, there are ten of them, ten soukala heads. They kill one or two elephants a year on the average. They sell the meat to the village that stands nearest to the spot where the animal was killed. This nets them about 50,000 cowries. [435] As for the tusks, they sell them for 120,000 or 140,000 cowries, sometimes 200,000. They always give a piece of the meat to the chief of the canton where the animal was killed. They hunt with [411] guns, while in the old days they hunted with poisoned spears but on the same individual basis as they do now.

[463] Elephant hunters do not cultivate the soil during the winter season, but their wives and children do.

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443 sages to specific villages, to find the help needed in the event of a
571 fight, and finally to find an escape route by which one can leave in the event of trouble.

443 The vendors in the larger markets of Mossi country include Yoru-
463 ba, Hausa and other ethnic groups, many of whose members were
563 born in Mossi country and have never visited the land of their fathers. The lives of these people are usually centered around the markets; where the markets are held every day, many of the men, women and children of these foreign groups spend almost all of their lives at the
[439] markets. In marked contrast to the Mossi, they usually sell products of foreign provenience, whether African or European, and seldom deal in the local products. These vendors are tolerated by the Mossi and are valued for their commerce, but are always regarded as outsiders. And as outsiders the markets do not belong to them, but only
443 to the Mossi. Even so, the Mossi do not really like the larger markets.
829 True, one can buy all kinds of wonderful goods on the large markets, but to the Mossi, a market is more than a place where one goes to buy and sell, even though everyone who goes there tries to do some of both.

443 There is a marked division of labor among the vendors in a Mossi
462 market—a division which can be seen at its best on the local markets.
438 Here only the women sell cooked food, beer, millet, rice, peanuts,
439 shea-butter, tobacco, and all of the other locally grown vegetables and vegetable products, except cotton which may also be sold by a man. In contrast, women do not sell such local products as cotton cloth, hemp, jewelry, iron implements and leather goods, which are the province of the men. Only men may butcher and sell animals and meat in the market. And they alone control the commerce in foreign food articles such as salt and dried fish. Both men and women sell the valuable imported kola nut, but only men sell goods of European manufacture such as cigarettes, matches, sugar, mirrors and so on.
[857] Small girls sell calabashes of water to everyone, and small boys wander through the market selling single cigarettes, bundles of a few matches, single lumps of sugar, chickens and guinea fowls, and skewers of roasted meat.

443 There is little competition about someone else having "stolen"
437 a customer. The reason for this is mainly that every person in the market is a potential customer of everyone else. Normally, a buyer
432 simply moves from seller to seller sampling the goods if that is possible (some unscrupulous men can even get drunk in the process of "sampling" beer) and trying to get the best bargain. No seller would think of running after a customer, and customers seldom, if ever, move away from a vendor in the hope that he would be called back to be sold the article at a lower price.

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taxes in their markets. The French abolished both of these offices when they took over the country, because they looked upon them as purely exploitative rather than regulatory agents. But like so many other Mossi political institutions which the French have "abolished," the Kos Naga and Raga Naba persist in many of the districts, and perhaps even in such large centers as Wagadougou. These officials persist because one of the basic assumptions of the Mossi is that everything must have a "chief." They believe that even the animals in the bush have chiefs, and if men, too, did not have chiefs then social life would be chaos. Thus, in the rural areas many or most district chiefs have retained their market officials even though the roles of these officials have become highly attenuated and so secretive that their existence is often denied.

Taxes collected at the market places played an important part in supporting the traditional political hierarchy of the Mossi people. The Kos Naba collected 250 cowries in taxes for every beef cattle slaughtered at the market and took their humps and gave them to a palace official called the Nemdo Naba (meat chief) for distribution in the royal household. He also collected 250 cowries on every cow sold there, but did not usually tax goats and sheep. In lieu of this he occasionally took a head or two of these animals from each herd that passed through the market and sent them to the palace kitchens. Donkeys were also taxed at the rate of 200 cowries per head sold in the market. Horses sold to the nobility were not taxed, but those exported were taxed about 300 cowries.

The Raga Naba collected the taxes on other commodities sold at market. Cotton weavers paid him taxes according to the size of their bolts of cloth, and cotton producers paid as much as 20 cowries on especially large sales of their raw produce. The tailors and dyers paid no fixed tax on their wares, but were asked to send clothing to the palace. Every donkey- or ox-load of salt which entered the market place was assessed a tax of 300 cowries. The smiths were not taxed in cowries, but had to supply the wives of the Moro Naba with hoes and the palace personnel with arrowheads, spearpoints and iron clubs. The jewelers also sent bracelets as presents to the ruler. There were no fixed taxes on cereals, vegetables and cooked food sold at market, but each day the Raga Naba, accompanied by several pages or retainers carrying baskets, went from vendor to vendor taking several calabashfuls of their produce for use in the palace. In addition, the vendors of cooked food had to feed the young grooms of the Moro Naba who were not regularly fed by the palace household. The beer sellers, too, while they were not assessed taxes, contributed a good percentage of their beverage to palace and market personnel who demanded the

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customary "taste" with greater frequency and freedom than did ordinary buyers. But the most valuable tax collected by the Raga Naba was on the sale of slaves, whose buyers paid a tax of 1,000 cowries per head.

There is some evidence, mainly from Europeans, that the Mossi occasionally may have found the market taxes prohibitive. Binger reports that during his visit to the Mossi in 1888, the high taxes exacted by the Moro Naba were "one of the causes which placed Wagadougou in second place [as a market town] and which made Mane the commercial capital of Mossi country" (Binger 1892 : 467). Binger, himself, was caught in the institutionalized gift system and wrote sarcastically: "The day of the market [at Wagadougou] the receipts are good. People bring every-thing to the palace including millet as well as hoes or peanuts, and everything is accepted. *All this giving is left to the generosity of the customers . . .*" (Binger 1892 : 465) (his italics). Even so, one cannot be sure that the Mossi felt the same way about paying taxes to their rulers as Binger felt. There is, incidentally, always an air of mutual recriminations among the Mossi and their rulers about the level of reciprocation between them. The people admit that the chiefs are indispensable; yet they complain that they are greedy—they "eat" too much. The chiefs insist that it is difficult to rule a territory and complain that the people are ungrateful.

SOCIAL AND RITUAL ASPECTS OF THE MARKETPLACE

Although the offices of Kos Naba and Raga Naba have been abolished officially, these officials still exist in many Mossi districts, and even when they do not exist, some men acting in their stead appropriate commodities in the markets for the chiefs. Furthermore, the *nakomce* (plural of *nabiga*—chief's child) or nobles still wander about the market places taking handfuls of kola nuts, peanuts and everything they need without the people becoming angry or complaining to the French about it. Once when I visited a market in the company of a *nabiga*, the local Raga Naba came up to where we were buying meat and indicated to the butcher that one of his customers was a *nabiga* and that he should treat him accordingly. It is not because of ignorance that the market people continue to grant these privileges to the nobles and the chiefs, but rather because they believe that only the market officials, and not the Europeans, can take care of the markets.

One of the most important tasks of the Raga Naba (or in the absence of this official, the Kos Naba) is to propitiate the *tengkouga* in the market place, or supervise the sacrifices which the *tengsobas* make to them. The task of the market spirits is believed to be so difficult—